

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Claims 1-2 and 4-15 have been amended as follows:

**Listing of Claims:**

Claim 1 (currently amended): A method of manufacturing a wheel rim  $[(10)]$  from a plate-like blank  $[(11)]$ , comprising the steps of:

curving said blank  $[(11)]$ ;

forming a hollow cylindrical body  $[(12)]$  by bringing end faces  $(30, 32)$  of the blank into abutment against each other;

forming a recess  $[(16)]$  depressed from a curved outer circumferential wall  $[(14)]$  of said hollow cylindrical body  $[(12)]$  toward an inner circumferential wall  $[(15)]$  thereof;

forming curled portions  $[(18)]$  on opposite ends of said hollow cylindrical body  $[(12)]$  by bending a circular end face  $[(34)]$  of said hollow cylindrical body  $[(12)]$  with said recess  $[(16)]$  formed therein toward another circular end face  $[(36)]$  thereof; and

forming hump portions  $[(20)]$  by pressing regions near said curled portions  $[(18)]$  of said hollow cylindrical body  $[(12)]$  with said curled portions  $[(18)]$  on the opposite ends thereof, from said inner circumferential wall  $[(15)]$  to raise said outer circumferential wall  $[(14)]$ .

Claim 2 (currently amended): A method according to claim 1, wherein said step of forming said curled portions  $[(18)]$  comprises the first curling step of forming said end faces into respective curved shapes, and the second curling step of forming the curved shapes into rectangular shapes.

Claim 3 (original): A method according to claim 2, wherein said first curling step is performed by a pressing process and said second curling step is performed by a spinning process.

Claim 4 (currently amended): A method according to claim 3, wherein in said first curling step, a side wall surface of said recess  $[(16)]$  is supported and said end face  $[(34)]$  of said hollow cylindrical body  $[(12)]$  near said side wall surface is curled, and thereafter another side wall surface of said recess  $[(16)]$  is supported and said end face  $[(36)]$  of said hollow cylindrical body  $[(12)]$  near said other side wall surface is curled.

Claim 5 (currently amended): A method according to claim 1, wherein said step of forming a hollow cylindrical body  $[(12)]$  is performed by friction stir welding.

Claim 6 (currently amended): A method according to claim 1, wherein through holes  $[(22)]$  are formed in said curled portions  $[(18)]$  and said recess  $[(16)]$  after said step of forming said hump portions  $[(20)]$ .

Claim 7 (currently amended): A method of manufacturing a wheel rim [(10)] by bringing end faces of a workpiece [(11)] into abutment against each other to form a hollow cylindrical body [(12)] and forming a circumferential recess [(16)] which is depressed from an outer circumferential wall [(14)] of said hollow cylindrical body [(12)] toward an inner circumferential wall [(15)] thereof, said method comprising the steps of providing protrusions ~~(27, 28)~~ disposed near ends of a joined area of said hollow cylindrical body [(12)] and extending in a joining direction, and then pressing said outer circumferential wall [(14)] of said hollow cylindrical body [(12)] to form said recess [(16)].

Claim 8 (currently amended): A method according to claim 7, wherein fingers ~~(26a through 26d)~~ are formed on respective corners of said workpiece [(11)] and joined to form said protrusions ~~(27, 28)~~.

Claim 9 (currently amended): A method according to claim 7, wherein said hollow cylindrical body [(12)] is cut circumferentially to form said protrusions ~~(27, 28)~~.

Claim 10 (currently amended): A method according to claim 7, wherein abutting edges of said hollow cylindrical body [(12)] are joined to each other by friction stir welding.

Claim 11 (currently amended): A method according to claim 7, wherein said recess [(16)] is formed by a spinning process or a roll forming process.

Claim 12 (currently amended): A wheel (122) for supporting a vehicular tire fitted thereover, comprising:

a wheel rim [(10)] formed as a hollow cylinder from a plate-like blank [(11)]; and

a wheel disk (102) formed from a plate-like blank [(11)], said wheel disk (102) having a peripheral edge portion (119) bent substantially parallel to the central axis of rotation of said wheel (122) and a slanted surface (119b) beveled from an end face of said peripheral edge portion (119) toward said central axis of rotation;

wherein a welded bead [(10)] to said slanted surface (119b) of said wheel disk (102), said wheel rim [(10)] and said wheel disk (102) being joined to each other.

Claim 13 (currently amended): A wheel (122) according to claim 12, wherein said slanted surface (119b) of said wheel disk (102) is tilted at an acute angle of 45° or greater with respect to said central axis of rotation of said wheel (122).

Claim 14 (currently amended): A method of manufacturing a wheel (122) for supporting a vehicular tire fitted thereover, said wheel (122) comprising:

a wheel rim [(10)] formed as a hollow cylinder from a plate-like blank [(11)]; and

a wheel disk (102) formed from a plate-like blank [(11)], said wheel disk (102) having a peripheral edge portion (119) bent substantially parallel to the central axis of rotation of said wheel (122) and a slanted surface (119b) beveled from an end face of said peripheral edge portion (119) toward said central axis of rotation;

said method comprising the steps of placing a pressure-fitted product (100) in which said peripheral edge portion (119) of said wheel disk (102) is press-fitted into an inner side surface of said wheel rim [(10)], holding said pressure-fitted product (100) such that said slanted surface (119b) of said wheel disk (102) is substantially horizontal, and thereafter welding said wheel rim [(10)] to said slanted surface (119b) to form a welded bead (700) thereby to join said wheel rim [(10)] and said wheel disk (102) to each other.

Claim 15 (currently amended): A method according to claim 14, wherein said pressure-fitted product (100) is held such that said slanted surface (119b) of said wheel disk (102) is more tilted toward said wheel rim [(10)].